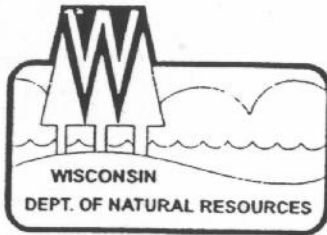


# **EXHIBIT 7**

**(AGENCY COORDINATION)**



## State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Tommy G. Thompson, Governor  
George E. Meyer, Secretary  
Scott A. Humrickhouse, Regional Director

Wisconsin Rapids Service Center  
473 Griffith Avenue  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494  
Telephone 715-421-7800  
FAX 715-421-7830

August 11, 2000

Manfred Enburg, P.E.  
Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc.  
6418 Normandy Lane Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53719

SUBJECT: DOT/DNR Initial Project Review  
Project I.D.: 1160-00-00  
Project Title: Wausau Beltline Reconstruction  
Highway: I-39/USH 51  
County: Marathon

Dear Mr. Enburg:

West Central Region Staff have reviewed preliminary information on the above referenced project under the DOT/DNR Cooperative Agreement. Pertinent environmental considerations are presented below:

### WETLANDS

Wetlands in the project area should be identified and delineated. Any wetland impacts should be avoided. If wetlands can not be avoided, impacts should be minimized. Options to minimize wetland impacts may include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) Designing the horizontal alignment to avoid the majority of wetland areas; 2) Tightening fill slopes and adding beam guards; 3) Lower the vertical alignment so that fill slopes do not extend as far into wetland areas; and 4) Limiting the scope of the project to reduce the width of the roadway.

After attempts to avoid and then minimize impacts have been made, any wetland losses shall be mitigated. On-site mitigation is recommended since there is a local shortage of wetlands in the Wausau area. These wetlands are essential to stormwater attenuation, wildlife habitat, water quality, etc.

### WILDLIFE/FISHERIES

The proposed project includes structures over the Big Rib River. The Big Rib River sustains a warm water sport fishery consisting of muskellunge, northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass, white sucker, and several forage fish species. This area of the Big Rib River is utilized by several waterfowl species including mallards, blue-winged teal, woodduck, and hooded merganser. Great blue herons fish in the shallows and many mammals, reptiles and amphibians are found within this riparian corridor. The Big Rib River is listed on the EPA 303d list of impaired waters for mercury and fish consumption.

### ENDANGERED RESOURCES

According to our Natural Resource Inventory, the black redhorse (*Moxostoma duquensnei*), state endangered fish species, was found in Lake Wausau and may utilize parts of the Big Rib River near the proposed project. Proper erosion control to prevent construction site sediment from entering the Big Rib River should minimize any impacts to these fish. Also, the wood turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*), state threatened species, has been surveyed in this area. Impacts to these turtles can be avoided by placing silt fence along the project to prevent the turtles from entering the construction area. Given the diversity of fish species, there is potential for any number of threatened or endangered mussels in the Rib River in the general vicinity of the project. A mussel survey should be completed to assess the likelihood of mussel impacts from the proposed project. If there would be significant impacts to mussel populations, individual mussels should be relocated downstream immediately prior to instream construction.

#### STORMWATER

In general, stormwater management is a critical issue in the Wausau Metropolitan area. The project should be in conformance to local stormwater plans and not preclude any future plans of local municipalities. Please contact Brad Johnson (715-359-2872) in our Wausau office regarding stormwater concerns in the Wausau area.

#### CONTAMINATED SITES

It is possible that the proposed project may encroach on one or more contaminated sites that are either in the process of being attenuated or are still being investigated. Please coordinate with Lisa Gutknecht (715-359-6514) in our Wausau office regarding specific potential contaminated sites.

#### PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

Purple loosestrife is quite common within the right-of-way of I-39/USH 51, especially south of the STH 29 East interchange. Special accommodations should be made to remove and properly dispose of the topsoil infested with purple loosestrife and its seeds. Equipment working in these areas should be properly washed before they are moved to other locations to prevent its spread to other disturbed areas of the project as well as other parts of the state. Efforts should be explored to control loosestrife either by mechanical or biological means.

#### FLOODPLAINS


The project does cross multiple mapped/zoned floodplain. If the project lies in such an area, DNR requires the results of a 100-year flood analysis for the structure(s). Also, if the new structure(s) will create an increase in the 100-year backwater, DNR requires that letters be sent to all affected upstream landowners. For areas lying outside of mapped/zoned floodplain, DNR may request results of DOT flow and backwater calculations. For project specific information, please consult with Brent Binder (715/421-7862), the Water Regulation and Zoning Engineer at our Wisconsin Rapids Area Office.

#### INTERCHANGES

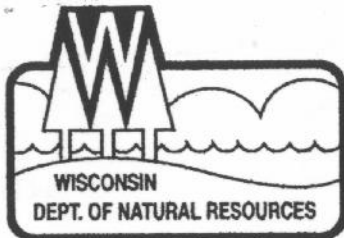
With the reconstruction of the beltline through the Wausau Metropolitan area comes the possible redesign and/or relocation of interchanges. The Department understands the need for safe and efficient interchanges. However, depending on the location, placement and design of the interchanges, there could be significant environmental impacts as a result. The Department will work with DOT during the design phase to satisfy safety, efficiency and environmental concerns relating to interchange construction.

The above comments are the Department's initial concerns on this project and do not constitute final concurrence. Final concurrence will be granted after review of plans and further consultation if necessary. If any of the concerns stated in this review require further clarification, please contact this office at 715/421-7867.

Sincerely,

  
Cameron Bump  
Environmental Analyst

- c. Dave Barth - DOT District 4
- Ted Johnson - DOT District 4
- Brad Johnson - WAU
- Lisa Gutknecht - WAU
- Tom Lovejoy - WCR
- Tom Meier - WAU
- Brent Binder - WIR



## State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Scott McCallum, Governor  
Darrell Bazzell, Secretary  
Scott A. Humrickhouse, Regional Director

Department of Natural Resources  
Wisconsin Rapids Service Center  
473 Griffith Avenue  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494  
Telephone 715-421-7800  
FAX 715-421-7830



August 20, 2002

Chris Saxby, P.E.  
Strand Associates, Inc.  
910 Wingra Drive  
Madison, WI 53715

SUBJECT: DOT/DNR Initial Project Review  
Project I.D.: 1166-02-00  
Project Title: Mallard Lane to West Bridge Street Reconstruction  
Highway: USH 51/STH 29  
County: Marathon

Dear Chris:

The Department has reviewed preliminary information on the above referenced project under the DOT/DNR Cooperative Agreement. The DOT sponsored Value Planning workshops (including all significant stakeholders) to design and evaluate different options for constructing this section of the project. The result of these workshops changed the design and altered impacts. Due to revision in design and impacts, the original environmental document did not accurately depict the project. The type of natural resource impacts that would be incurred would be similar to the previous design. However, the increased width of the highway corridor would cause greater acreage in wetland impacts. The following resource information is primarily related to the Big Rib River corridor:

### WETLANDS

The expansion of the highway corridor will result in increased impacts to wetlands than the interchange alternative presented in the original EA. The wetlands impacted are primarily forested riparian along the Big Rib River. Any impacts should be minimized and appropriately mitigated. In the Wausau area, every effort should be made to mitigate wetlands either on or near site.

### FISHERIES

The Big Rib River is a warm water sport fishery with species population consisting of muskellunge northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass, white sucker, northern redhorse, and forage species. Provided proper erosion control measures are implemented on the project, there should be no impacts to either of these species.

### FLOODPLAINS

A determination has been made that the project lies within a mapped/zoned floodplain. As such, DNR requires the results of a 100-year flood analysis for the structure(s). Also, if the new structure(s) will create an increase in the 100-year backwater, DNR requires that letters be sent to all affected upstream landowners. For areas lying outside of mapped/zoned floodplain, DNR may request results of DOT flow and backwater calculations. For project specific information, please consult with Julia Stephenson, Water Regulation and Zoning Engineer at our Wisconsin Rapids Area Office (phone # 715/421-7862).

#### ENDANGERED RESOURCES


According to our Natural Heritage Inventory, both Wood Turtle (state threatened) and Redside Dace (state special concern) occur along and in the Big Rib River near or at the project site. Provided proper erosion control measures are implemented on the project, there should be no impacts to either of these species. The following measures should be incorporated into the project to minimize the chance of impacting Wood Turtles: If project construction will start in the spring, the perimeter of the area to be disturbed should be protected with properly installed silt fence prior to May 1 to discourage turtles from entering the work area. If the construction area cannot be silt-fenced by May 1, the construction start date should be delayed until Sept. 1 or later. The latter requirement can be waived as early as July 1 if the site is surveyed by a qualified biologist and no evidence of turtle nesting is found

#### CONTAMINATED SITES

There are multiple sites of concern in this section of the project that either have been confirmed to be contaminated or have the potential to be contaminated. Please coordinate with Lisa Gutknecht, Hydrogeologist at our Wausau Service Center (715-359-6514) for guidance regarding contaminated sites. Also, sediment in the Big Rib River could contain contaminants that would involve special handling requirements.

The above comments are the Department's initial concerns on this project and do not constitute final concurrence. Final concurrence will be granted after review of plans and further consultation if necessary. If any of the concerns stated in this review require further clarification, please contact this office at 715-421-7867.

Sincerely,



Cameron Bump  
Environmental Analyst

- c. Julia Stephenson - WIR
- Lisa Gutknecht - WAU
- Doug Ross - DOT District 4
- Janet Smith - DOT District 4

**From:** <Kamke.Sherry@epamail.epa.gov>  
**To:** <chris.saxby@strand.com>  
**Date:** 8/23/02 4:29PM  
**Subject:** USH 51/STH 29 West Interchange EA

Chris,

I just wanted to follow-up with you regarding our conversation. As I stated on the phone, EPA will not be providing written comments on the project right now but we will be interested in reviewing and commenting on the EA when it is released. I am most interested in confirming that WisDOT has avoided impacting the wetlands along the Big Rib River to the maximum extent possible. I will also be looking for what additional steps WisDOT will take to minimize impacts, including the use of retaining walls. Also, I will be looking at what plans WisDOT has for compensating for impacts that can not be avoided.

I do feel that the West Arterial project and this one have more than minimal connectivity, given their close proximity and their impacts to Big Rib River and associated wetlands. As such, I think the EA's for these respective projects should focus on the cumulative impacts from these projects a little more than the other four or five projects in the Wausau area. Particularly, it would be good to see how WisDOT has been able to align these projects so as to minimize impacts to the Big Rib River and its wetlands.

I hope this helps provide you some idea of what I will be looking for in the EA. I'll look forward to reviewing the EA for this project. You can contact me at 312-353-5794 if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
Sherry